DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 235 170 SP 023 094

AUTHOR Enger, John M.
TITLE Perceptions of Teaching as a Career by Bahamian Grade 12 Students in College-Preparatory Programs.
PUB DATE Apr 83
NOTE 61p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (Montreal, Canada, April 11-15, 1983).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Career Choice; Employment Level; Foreign Countries; *Goal Orientation; Higher Education; Parent Influence; Professional Recognition; Secondary Education; Secondary School Students; *Student Attitudes; *Student Educational Objectives; Teacher Education; Teacher Recruitment; Teacher Salaries; *Teaching (Occupation)
IDENTIFIERS *Bahamas

ABSTRACT

A questionnaire was administered to 1403 twelfth grade students in the Bahamas who were described as potentially eligible to pursue college-level work leading to teacher certification. Student opinions were sought on teacher training programs at the College of the Bahamas, conditions of teaching employment, characteristics of students in secondary schools, and contrasts between teaching and other occupations. The majority of respondents indicated that parents were most influential in their career plans, and continued education was deemed important by almost all of those responding. At least some interest in becoming a teacher was expressed by 32 percent of the students. In rating selected aspects of the college teacher education program, the most common student response was "don't know." Of the 10 conditions of teacher employment assessed, salary, equipment and facilities were rated the lowest. Aspects of teacher employment were rated lower than those of other professions, particularly in the areas of prestige and rewards. Suggestions are made for efforts to improve the image of teaching among parents of students who have the potential to become teachers and the students themselves. Tables and figures are inlcuded of study results. (Author/JD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED235170

PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHING AS A CAREER BY BAHAMIAN GRADE 12 STUDENTS IN COLLEGE-PREPARATORY PROGRAMS

by

John M. Enger

Arkansas State University

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

✓ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

John M. Enger

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Paper presented at the Annual Meeting
of the American Educational Research Association,
Montreal, April, 1983.

SP023094

Abstract

PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHING AS A CAREER BY BAHAMIAN GRADE 12 STUDENTS IN COLLEGE-PREPARATORY PROGRAMS

Grade 12 (Form 5) students in college-preparatory programs throughout the Bahamas were surveyed for their perceptions of the teaching profession. A total of 1403 students participated in the study.

The majority of the Grade 12 students in college-preparatory programs were female (62 percent). The person identified as being most influential on their career plans was the parent. Continued education was deemed important by almost all (99 percent) of those responding. At least some interest in becoming a teacher was expressed by 32 percent of the Grade 12 students. There were 128 students (9 percent) who expressed much interest in the profession.

When asked to rate selected aspects of the program at The College of the Bahamas (entrance requirements, length and appeal of the program, and costs), the most common response was "Don't Know." Of the ten conditions of teacher employment assessed, the tangible or material aspects of the job (salary, equipment and facilities) were rated the lowest.

Of those responding, 56 percent of the Grade 12 students rated the overall attitude of students in schools in the Bahamas as being lower than the overall ability. Conditions of teaching were perceived adequate when rated in isolation; however, when compared with other vocations in which they were interested, aspects of teacher employment were rated lower. Teaching was not perceived to be more or less difficult than other lines of work considered, but the pay, prestige and rewards were rated higher for employment in occupations other than teaching.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In November, 1981, the Minister of Education, The Honorable Darrell Rolle, announced the establishment of The National Teacher Education Committee. The charge of the committee was to address all aspects of the supply, education, and professional development of teachers for the Nation's schools. Named chairperson of the committee was Dr. Keva Bethel, Principal of The College of the Bahamas.

A four-member subcommittee was appointed to outline procedures by which student attitudes toward teaching could be assessed. Subcommittee members and the education bodies they represented were: Mrs. Inez Peet, College of the Bahamas; Mrs. Gloriann Strachen, Ministry of Education; Mr. Leonard Archer, secondary school principals; and Mr. Dan Symonette, classroom teachers. The foresight and cooperation of these educators were instrumental in developing the design and procedures for this investigation. Secondary school principals supervised the administration of the questionnaire. Dr. Bethel provided continued support throughout the duration of the study.

Ms. Allison Treco and Ms. Cathy Burrows, students at The College of the Bahamas, aided in the compilation of the data. At the computer center in the Ministry of Finance, Mr. Rahming assisted the analysis. Subsequent investigations were conducted on computer facilities at Arkansas State University. Mrs. Betty Cheshier, secretary to the Department of Educational Administration and Secondary Education at Arkansas State University, typed the text and tables for this report. The cooperation and skills of each of these people are gratefully acknowledged in the completion of this study of Grade 12 student perceptions of teaching.

Table of Contents

	Page
List of Tables	vi
List of Figures	vii
Heading	
Introduction	1
Statement of the Problem	1
Student Population	2
Methods and Procedures	2
Cover Letter and Directions	3
Development of Questionnaire Items	3
Data Recording Procedures	5
Data Analysis Procedures	5
Results	5
Background Information	6
Teacher Training Program	10
Teaching Conditions	14
Student Characteristics	16
Teaching Compared with Other Lines of Work	16
What Would it Take to Make You Very Interested in Becoming a Teacher?	16
Contrasted Findings	19
Background	20
Influence of Persons on Career Plans	22

Heading	Page
Interest in Teaching	26
Ratings of Teacher Training Program	27
Conditions of Teacher Employment	28
Student Characteristics	32
Teaching Compared with Other Lines of Work	35
Student Ability vs. Student Attitude	36
A Profile of Those Indicating "Much Interest" in Teaching	38
Discussion of the Findings	38
Male-Female	38
Influence of Selected Persons on Career Plans	38
Importance of Further Education	39
Interest in Teaching	39
Teacher Training Program	39
Conditions of Teacher Employment	40
Student Characteristics	40
Teaching vs. Other Lines of Work	41
Recommendations	41
Conclusion	43
References	45

Tables

Table		Page
1.	Average Bahamas Junior Certificate (BJC) Achievement Examinations Passed	7
2.	Percentage Responses to Background Questionnaire Items	8
3	Percentage Responses Indicating Overall Influence Selected Persons Have on Grade 12 Student Career Plans	11
4.	Percentage Responses Expressing Grade 12 Student Interest in Becoming a Teacher	12
5.	Percentage Totals of Grade 12 Student Ratings of Selected Aspects of the Teacher Training Program at the College of the Bahamas	13
6.	Percentage Totals of Grade 12 Student Ratings of Conditions in Which Teachers are Employed	15
7.	Percentage Totals of Grade 12 Student Ratings of Characteristics of Students in Schools Today	17
8.	Percentage Responses Comparing Grade 12 Student Ratings of Teaching and Other Lines of Work	18
9.	Average Influence of Selected Persons on Grade 12 Student Career Plans, Assessed on 3-point Scale	25
10.	Average Grade 12 Student Ratings of the Conditions Under Which Teachers are Employed, Assessed on 5-point Scale	31
11.	Average Grade 12 Student Ratings of Characteristics of Students in Schools in the Bahamas, Assessed on 3-point Scale	34
12.	Cross Tabulation of Grade 12 Student Ratings of the Overall Ability and Overall Attitude of Students in Schools in the Bahamas	37

Figures

Figure | Page

1. Contrasted Average Grade 12 Student Ratings of Influence of Selected Persons on Their Career Plans 23

2. Contrasted Average Grade 12 Student Ratings of Conditions of Teacher Employment 29

3. Contrasted Average Grade 12 Student Ratings of Characteristics of Students in School in the Bahamas 33

PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHING AS A CAREER BY BAHAMIAN GRADE 12 STUDENTS IN COLLEGE-PREPARATORY PROGRAMS

Introduction

Since gaining independence in 1973, the Commonwealth of the Bahamas has strived toward Bahamization in all areas of management, service and labor. However, due to a shortage of qualified Bahamian teachers, it has been necessary to employ many foreign educators to teach at all levels of public and private education. Confounding the exiting shortage, a 1985 projection indicates only five prospective teachers will complete their training at the nation's only institution of higher learning, The College of the Bahamas.

To address the recruitment and training of teachers for the national education system, the Minister of Education in November, 1981, created the National Teacher Education Committee. The structure of this committee was designed to represent various educational bodies throughout the Bahamas. Inherent in the committee's charge was the assignment to investigate the interest of qualified personnel in choosing teaching as their profession.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this investigation was to survey the perceptions of Grade 12 students in college-preparatory programs toward the teaching profession. These perceptions were categorized with respect to (a) the teacher training program, (b) conditions of teaching employment, (c) characteristics of students in school, and (d) contrasts between

teaching and other occupations. For background information, students were categorized by sex, domicile, type of school attended, vocational aspirations and interest in teaching. A concurrent assessment was conducted to determine the degree to which other persons influenced the students' career plans.

Student Population

To assess Grade 12 student perceptions toward teaching, the population was limited to those who were enrolled in college-preparatory programs and those who had the ability to be in such programs, but had elected training in a technical field. These Grade 12 students (and those completing Form 5 in the English system) represent all students in the Bahamas who could attend college to pursue training and certification in the teaching profession.

In Nassau, the Nation's capitol, thirteen secondary schools (four public and nine private) have programs culminating in the Grade 12 or Form 5 educational level. Throughout the family islands there are 21 senior level high schools (17 public and four private).

Methods and Procedures

A two-page, back-to-back questionnaire was developed for administration to Grade 12 (Form 5) students described as potentially eligible to pursue college-level work, leading to teacher certification. Principals at each of the 34 senior high schools throughout the Bahamas were contacted to coordinate Grade 12 (Form 5) student participation in the survey. Initial contact with the principals was made by letter by the chairperson of the National Teacher Education Committee (See Appendix A).

Subsequent contact by phone was made with each of the principals of schools in Nassau. Telephone contact was made with 14 of the 21 family island principals. Follow-up letters, however, were sent to each principal not contacted by phone (Note Appendices B and C).

Cover Letter and Directions

With the cover letter a set of directions was developed for administering the questionnaire. Directions for distribution, collection by a student, and return of the completed questionnaires were included with each set (Note Appendix D).

Development of Questionnaire Items

Since questionnaires were sent to schools and returned in preaddressed packets, questionnaires could be classified and contrasted by school type (government or private) and location (Nassau or family island). To generate additional background information upon which pre-planned contrasts could be made, students were asked to indicate citizenship status, sex, and whether or not they were interested in pursuing teaching as a career.

To contrast achievement, students were asked how many Bahamas Junior Certificate (BJC) examinations they had passed, and whether or not they had received a credit in BJC or Pitman English. Home educational level was addressed by asking whether either of the parents had attended college. General educational and vocational aspirations were assessed with two items inquiring what students would be doing in the year following Grade 12 and in five years. Although the responses to these items could be used to address reasons for entering college in regard to academic and

vocational preferences (Gordon, 1982), prior evidence indicates relatively equal initial decisions on careers and choice of major (Goodson, 1978).

Students were also asked the extent to which various people had influenced their career plans. Parents, peers, teachers, relatives and other community members were rated as having much influence, some influence or no influence on career plans. Similarly, Pallone et al (1970) investigated such influence on the occupational preference of 379 adolescents. Parents were rated second to a category labeled "a person who holds this job." However, parental responses could be confounded in such a classification if they held such a position. The subsequent key influential figures in this study were ranked peer, teacher, sibling, neighbor school counselor and relative. Classical studies in the psychology of career choice (Roe, 1956, and Super, 1957) identify the parent as a primary determinant of vocational selection, but a recent study indicates this influence is not understood (Bratcher, 1982).

Four sections of questions were developed to assess the categories expressed in the statement of the problem. First, students were asked their reaction to aspects of the teacher training program at the nation's only institution of higher education. The entrance requirements, length of the program, appeal of the program and perceived cost were addressed. Secondly, students were asked to rate on a five-point scale selected conditions of teaching. These ten conditions covered various aspects of a teaching appointment: buildings and classrooms; books, equipment, and supplies; salary; location of appointment; chance for advancement; subjects taught; number of students taught; time spent in school; preparation required outside of school; and principal's support of the teacher.

In the third section, three characteristics of students in school were assessed: overall student ability; attitude; and conduct. In the fourth section, students were asked to contrast teaching with other lines of work in which they were interested. Comparisons were made in regard to salary, job difficulty, prestige of the position, and chance for advancement. In a final open-ended item, students were asked what it would take to make them very interested in teaching (See Appendix E).

Data Recording Procedures

After an initial pilot study conducted with Grade 11 students in a government high school and Form 6 in a private high school, alternatives for selection-type items were developed from selected open-ended questions. Responses were tabled by frequency and proportion. Where Likert-type response scales were used, average response levels were reported.

Data Analysis Procedures

Overall responses were contrasted by item means and proportions. Group responses to each item were contrasted by sex of the respondent, school location (Nassau or family island), school type (government or private), and whether or not the student expressed an interest in teaching. Independent t-test comparisons between groups were made on items based on Likert-scale data. Analyses of categorical response items were made by chi-square tests of independence.

Results

All 13 senior secondary schools in Nassau participated in the study. A total of 1136 questionnaires were completed representing nearly 100

percent of all Grade 12 students in college-preparatory programs. Of the 21 senior secondary schools throughout the family islands, 13 schools were represented in the survey with 267 completed questionnaires. The family island responses received represent about half of the Grade 12 family island students in college-preparatory programs. Thus, a total of 1403 Grade 12 (Form 5) students in college-preparatory programs throughout the Bahamas participated in this investigation (See Appendix F).

Background Information

Citizenship. Based on the responses to the 1403 completed questionnaires, 1342 students identified themselves as Bahamian citizens; whereas, 54 indicated they were not Bahamian citizens. Seven students did not respond to this item. Thus, of those responding, 96 percent held Bahamian citizenship and 4 percent did not.

Sex. The ratio of women to men Grade 12 students in college-preparatory programs was 1.65 to 1. Females represented 62 percent of the Grade 12 students participating in the study. There was a 38 percent male representation.

Educational background. In reporting their educational background, the Grade 12 students reported an average 5.3 BJC (Bahamas Junior Certificate) examinations passed on the first sitting, as shown in Table 1. An average mean 3.8 BJC examinations were passed on the second sitting. Overall, an average 7.6 BJC examinations were passed when combining results from these two sittings.

BJC or Pitman English. When asked if they had earned a credit in either BJC or Pitman English, 74 percent reported yes, and 26 percent reported no, as presented in Table 2.

Table 1

Average Bahamas Junior Certificate (B.J.C.)
Achievement Examinations Passed

BJC Test Administration	Average Composite (1403)	By Sex		By School Location			By School Type			By Interest in Teaching		
		Male (524)	Female (866)	Nassau (1136)		Family Island (267)	Public (732)		Private (671)	Yes (441)		No (952)
1st Sitting	5.25	5.26	5.22	5.68	*	3.43	4.17	*	6.39	4.61	*	5.54
2nd Sitting	3.78	3.96	3.66	3.93	*	3.27	3.49	*	4.22	3.51	*	3.93
TOTAL	7.57	7.60	7.54	7.94	*	5.97	6.67	*	8.54	7.02	*	7.82

*p<.05

Table 2

Percentage Responses to Background Questionnaire Items

Questionnaire Item	Response Scale	Composite Percentage (1403)	By Sex		By School Location		By School Type		By Interest in Teaching	
			Male (524)	Female (866)	Nassau (1136)	Family Island (267)	Public (732)	Private (671)	Yes (441)	No (952)
Do you have a credit in BJC or Pitman Eng?	Yes	74	72	75	77 *	60	67 *	82	72	75
	No	26	28	25	23	40	33	18	28	25
Did either of your parents attend college?	Yes	24	28 *	22	27 *	13	14 *	35	20 *	26
	No	76	72	78	73	87	86	65	80	74
What will you be doing after completing this year in school?	Bahamian school	28	24 *	31	27	34	28 *	29	31 *	27
	School abroad	22	24	21	22	21	16	29	19	24
	Work in Bahamas	43	44	42	44	39	50	35	46	41
	Work abroad	1	2		1	1	1	1		1
	Other	6	6	6	6	5	5	6	4	7
What kind of work do you think you will be doing five years from now?	Profession	38	41 *	36	37	44	41 *	36	40 *	38
	Business	42	35	47	43	39	44	40	47	40
	Labor	2	4	1	2	1	3	1	2	2
	Student	10	10	10	11	7	5	15	6	11
	Other	8	10	6	7	9	7	8	5	9
How important is further education to your career plans?	Very Important	83	79 *	85	82 *	87	85 *	80	87 *	81
	Somewhat Important	16	19	14	17	12	13	19	12	18
	Not Important	1	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	1

*p<.05

Parents' educational level. When asked whether or not either of their parents had attended college, 24 percent responded affirmatively while 76 percent said no. In a recent study of entering freshmen at 368 American colleges and universities, 61 percent reported thier fathers had attended colleges; whereas, 40 percent reported their mothers had attended college (The Chronicle of Higher Education, 1982a).

Plans for the year following Grade 12. Concerning the coming year, 28 percent planned to attend school in the Bahamas, 22 percent planned to attend school outside the Bahamas, 43 percent indicated work in the Bahamas, 1 percent indicated work outside the Bahamas and the remaining 6 percent had other plans. Totaling these responses, 50 percent indicated continued schooling and 44 percent expressed intentions of working during the year following Grade 12. In the aforementioned American survey, only .4 percent of the entering freshmen indicated education as their probable field of study. The present day entering college student is seemingly more oriented toward college success with the interest in business careers doubling since 1968 (The Chronicle of Higher Education, 1982b). Sixty-five percent of those surveyed in Fall, 1981, indicated "being well of financially" as being a very important goal.

Future plans. When asked what they thought they would be doing in five years, 38 percent reported intentions of being engaged in some profession, 42 percent identified business intentions, 2 percent said labor, 10 percent reported continued schooling, and the remaining 8 percent perceived themselves in pursuits other than the four categories mentioned.

Importance of further education. When asked how important further education was to their career plans, only 1 percent reported not important.

For the 99 percent indicating further education to be of importance, 83 percent reported further education was very important to their career plans and 16 percent indicated it was somewhat important to their career plans.

Persons influential on career plans. In identifying the extent to which selected persons have influenced their career plans, parents were perceived as being most influential. As shown in Table 3, 91 percent of the Grade 12 students indicated their parents had influenced their career plans. Over half of those responding (58 percent) indicated their parents had much influence on their career plans. Almost one-third (31 percent) reported teachers had much influence on their career plans. In contrast, approximately three-fourths (71 percent) of the students responding indicated ministers or clergymen had no influence on career plans. Almost two-thirds (65 percent) responded there had been no influence on career plans by youth leaders. These findings are similar to those of earlier reports (Pallone et al, 1970; Roe, 1956; Super, 1957; Bratcher, 1982) indicating the influence of the parents on career choice.

Interest in teaching. Overall, 441 students (32 percent) of the Grade 12 students indicated an interest in teaching, as presented in Table 4. Much interest in teaching was reported in 128 (9 percent) of the students responding; whereas, 313 students (23 percent) indicated some interest in teaching.

Teacher Training Program

When asked to rate four aspects of the teacher training program in the Bahamas, the most popular answer was "Don't Know." As shown in Table 5, 51 percent of those responding were unfamiliar with the appeal of the of the teacher training program, 44 percent didn't know about the length

Table 3

Percentage Responses Indicating Overall Influence Selected Persons Have on Grade 12 Student Career Plans

Selected Persons	Number Responding	Much Influence	Some Influence	No Influence
Friend	1315	10	58	32
Parent	1337	58	33	9
Relative	1320	24	50	26
Teacher	1306	31	40	29
Guidance Counselor	1273	16	36	48
Minister or Clergyman	1264	8	21	71
Youth Leader	1277	10	25	65

Table 4

Percentage Responses Expressing Grade 12
Student Interest in Becoming a Teacher

Interest in Teaching by Level	Composite Percentage (1403)	By Sex		By School Location		By School Type	
		Male (524)	Female (866)	Nassau (1136)	Family Island (267)	Public (732)	Private (671)
Primary School Teacher							
Much Interest	6	3 *	7	4 *	12	8 *	3
Some Interest	19	10	25	19	20	23	16
No Interest	75	87	68	77	68	69	81
Secondary School Teacher							
Much Interest	6	3 *	7	4 *	9	8 *	3
Some Interest	17	15	19	17	19	20	14
No Interest	77	82	74	79	72	72	83
Teaching (Composite)							
Much Interest	9	5 *	11	7 *	17	13 *	5
Some Interest	23	16	27	23	21	25	20
No Interest	68	79	62	70	62	62	75

*p<.05

Table 5

Percentage Totals of Grade 12 Student Ratings of Selected Aspects of the Teacher Training Program at the College of the Bahamas

	Composite Percentage (1403)	By Sex		By School Location		By School Type		By Interest in Teaching	
		Male (524)	Female (866)	Nassau (1136)	Family Island (267)	Public (732)	Private (671)	Yes (441)	No (952)
College Entrance Requirements									
Too High	13	11	14	12	15	18 *	7	18 *	11
Appropriate	41	40	41	41	38	45	37	46	38
Too Low	5	5	5	6	3	2	8	4	5
Don't Know	41	44	40	41	44	35	48	32	46
Length of Training Period									
Too Short	11	12	9	10	11	12 *	9	10 *	10
Appropriate	39	38	40	40	36	44	33	48	35
Too Long	6	5	7	6	7	9	4	9	5
Don't Know	44	45	44	44	46	35	54	33	50
Appeal of Teacher Training Program									
Good	16	15	17	16	18	22 *	10	23 *	13
Fair	26	27	24	26	23	28	23	31	23
Poor	7	7	7	8	5	5	9	7	8
Don't Know	51	51	52	50	54	45	58	39	56
Cost of College									
Affordable	33	33	33	36 *	20	27 *	39	31 *	34
Would Need Small Grant	13	14	13	14	13	18	9	20	11
Too Expensive	18	17	19	16	27	27	9	21	16
Don't Know	36	36	35	34	40	28	43	28	39

*p<.05

of the program, 41 percent didn't know the college entrance requirements, and 36 percent were unfamiliar with the cost of college.

Of those rating the college entrance requirements, 69 percent viewed them appropriate, while 22 percent rated entrance requirements as being too high and 9 percent rated them as too low. Of those rating the length of training period, 70 percent deemed it appropriate. Yet, 19 percent rated the length of the training period too short and 11 percent rated it too long.

The appeal of the teacher training program was rated either fair or good by 85 percent of those evaluating that aspect of the program at The College of the Bahamas. The appeal of the program was rated poor by 15 percent. Of those rating the cost of college, a similar proportion indicated the cost affordable (51 percent) as did those who indicated a need for financial support (49 percent). In an American survey of 192,248 students, two-thirds indicated concern about financing their college education (The Chronicle of Higher Education, 1982a).

Teaching Conditions

When asked to rate ten conditions under which teachers are employed, the majority of the Grade 12 student ratings fell in the middle categories of the five-point rating scale (excellent, good, fair, poor, very poor). Approximately 8 percent of all ratings were observed in the excellent category with about 7 percent falling in the very poor classification. As shown in Table 6, those conditions which received the lowest ratings were supplies (books and equipment), facilities (buildings and classrooms) and salary. Conditions of teaching which received the highest ratings were principal's support of the teacher and the time the teacher is required

Table 6

Percentage Totals of Grade 12 Student Ratings of Conditions in Which Teachers are Employed

Condition of Employment	Number Responding	Rating				
		Excellent	Good	Adequate	Poor	Very Poor
Buildings and Classrooms	1342	4	16	37	31	12
Books, Equipment, Supplies	1339	4	19	31	34	12
Salary	1284	7	19	36	28	10
Location of Teaching Appointment	1204	4	31	46	15	4
Chance for Advancement	1247	6	31	31	27	5
Teaching Load: Subjects Taught	1265	9	30	43	15	3
Teaching Load: Number of Students Taught	1258	6	28	39	20	7
Teaching Load: Time in School	1275	13	38	39	8	2
Preparation Required Outside of School	1233	5	29	41	19	6
Principal's Support of Teacher	1269	24	33	26	11	6

to be in school. More than 50 percent of the ratings were observed in the excellent and good categories for both of these conditions of teacher employment.

Student Characteristics

When asked to rate three characteristics of students in schools in the Bahamas, the Grade 12 students perceived student ability to be better than attitude or conduct. As presented in Table 7, only 6 percent of the ratings of student ability fell in the poor category; whereas, 38 percent of the ratings of student attitude and 32 percent of the ratings of student conduct fell in the poor category. The majority of the ratings were in the fair category for each of the three characteristics assessed.

Teaching Compared with Other Lines of Work

Overall, the pay, prestige and rewards in teaching were perceived to be less than for other lines of work the Grade 12 students were considering. Note in Table 8, 64 percent indicated teaching to have the lesser salary and 53 percent indicated teaching to have fewer rewards or chance for advancement than other lines of work being considered. In general, difficulty of the job was not perceived differently for teaching than other lines of work being considered.

What Would it Take to Make You Very Interested in Becoming a Teacher?

In an open-ended item, students were asked to indicate what it would take to make them very interested in becoming a teacher. In categorizing

Table 7

Percentage Totals of Grade 12 Student Ratings of Characteristics of Students in Schools Today

Characteristic	Number Responding	Rating		
		Good	Fair	Poor
Student Ability	1349	33	61	6
Student Attitude	1347	7	55	38
Student Conduct	1346	10	58	32

Table 8

Percentage Responses Comparing Grade 12 Student Ratings of Teaching and Other Lines of Work

Aspect of the Job	Composite Percentage (1403)	By Sex		By School Location		By School Type		By Interest in Teaching	
		Male (524)	Female (866)	Nassau (1136)	Family Island (267)	Public (732)	Private (671)	Yes (441)	No (952)
The Pay or Salary									
Teaching More	15	16 *	14	14	18	22 *	8	20 *	13
About the Same	21	18	24	22	18	27	15	28	18
Teaching Less	64	66	62	64	64	51	77	52	69
Difficulty of the Job									
Teaching More	31	30	31	30	34	32	30	32	30
About the Same	33	31	34	33	32	34	32	37	31
Teaching Less	36	39	35	37	34	34	38	31	39
Prestige of the Position									
Teaching More	15	17	13	13 *	22	17 *	12	18 *	13
About the Same	32	30	34	32	32	40	25	43	27
Teaching Less	53	53	53	55	46	43	63	39	60
Rewards/Future/Advancement									
Teaching More	20	22 *	19	18 *	29	26 *	14	26 *	18
About the Same	26	20	29	25	26	34	18	30	23
Teaching Less	54	58	52	57	44	40	68	44	59

*p<.05

the responses, 35 percent indicated higher teacher salaries, 28 percent responded better conditions of employment, 15 percent identified improvement in student attitude and behavior, 3 percent stated concersn about teacher training, 3 percent indicated a need for greater prestige for the position, and 2 percent identified better chances for advancement. Of the 1403 respondents, 24 percent indicated in their response to the open-ended item, there was absolutely nothing which would interest them in becoming a teacher.

Contrasted Findings

Responses to each section of the questionnaire were further analyzed by four selected contrasts: whether the respondent was male or female, whether the respondent resided in Nassau or a family island, whether the respondent attended a government (public) or private school, and whether the respondent indicated an interest or no interest in becoming a teacher. Responses to two questionniare items rating characteristics of students in schools in the Bahamas were also contrasted: overall student ability and overall student attitude.

All contrasts of independent group characteristics measured on interval or ratio scale data were tested with the independent t-test statistic. The null hypothesis tested was no significant difference between group means at the 95 percent confidence level. Variables eliciting categorical responses were tested with the chi-square statistic. The null hypothesis tested was independence between group classifications at the 95 percent confidence level.

Background

Male vs. female. There were no significant differences noted between Grade 12 males and females in college-preparatory programs in average number of BJC examinations passed, as presented in Table 1. Nor were differences noted between males and females in credits earned in BJC or Pitman English, as shown in Table 2. A higher proportion of the males (28 percent) than females (23 percent) reported parents had attended college. Proportionately, more women indicated plans to further their education in schools in the Bahamas. Although five-year career expectations were similar, a greater proportion of male respondents planned engagement in a profession; whereas, proportionately more females planned a business career. The Grade 12 women placed greater importance on furthering their education to support their career plans.

Nassau vs. family islands. The Grade 12 students in college-preparatory programs from Nassau on the average, as shown in Table 1, passed two more BJC examinations than their family island counterparts. From Table 2, a greater proportion of Nassau students earned a credit in BJC or Pitman English. A greater proportion of Nassau students reported their parents attended college than family island students. Proportionately, more family island students indicated plans to attend a Bahamian school after completing Grade 12; whereas, more Nassau students indicated plans to work in the Bahamas after Grade 12. In future career plans, proportionately more family island students planned engagement in a profession; whereas, more Nassau students planned to enter business or continue their schooling. The importance of further education to their

career plans was expressed by both groups. However, family island students placed a greater emphasis on continued education than did their Nassau counterparts.

Public vs. private. Grade 12 students attending private schools reported an average of 8.5 Bahamas Junior Certificate examinations passed compared to an average of 6.7 BJC examinations passed reported by Grade 12 students attending public (government) schools, as indicated in Table 1. Also noted in Table 2, a higher percentage of private school students received a credit in BJC or Pitman English, and greater proportions of their parents had attended college, than was reported by students in public schools. Difference in plans for the year following Grade 12 was noted with 50 percent of the public school students indicating intentions of working in the Bahamas, in contrast to 35 percent of the private school students. Furthermore, 29 percent of the private school students expressed plans to attend school abroad, in contrast to 16 percent of the public school students. Differences in five-year career expectations were noted by 15 percent of the private school students reporting planned continued student status versus 5 percent of the public school students. Although the importance of further education was indicated by both groups, 85 percent of the public school students rated further education very important to their career plans compared to 80 percent of the private school students.

Interested in teaching vs. Not interested in teaching. As presented in Table 1, those not interested in teaching averaged about one more BJC examination passed than those who professed an interest in teaching.

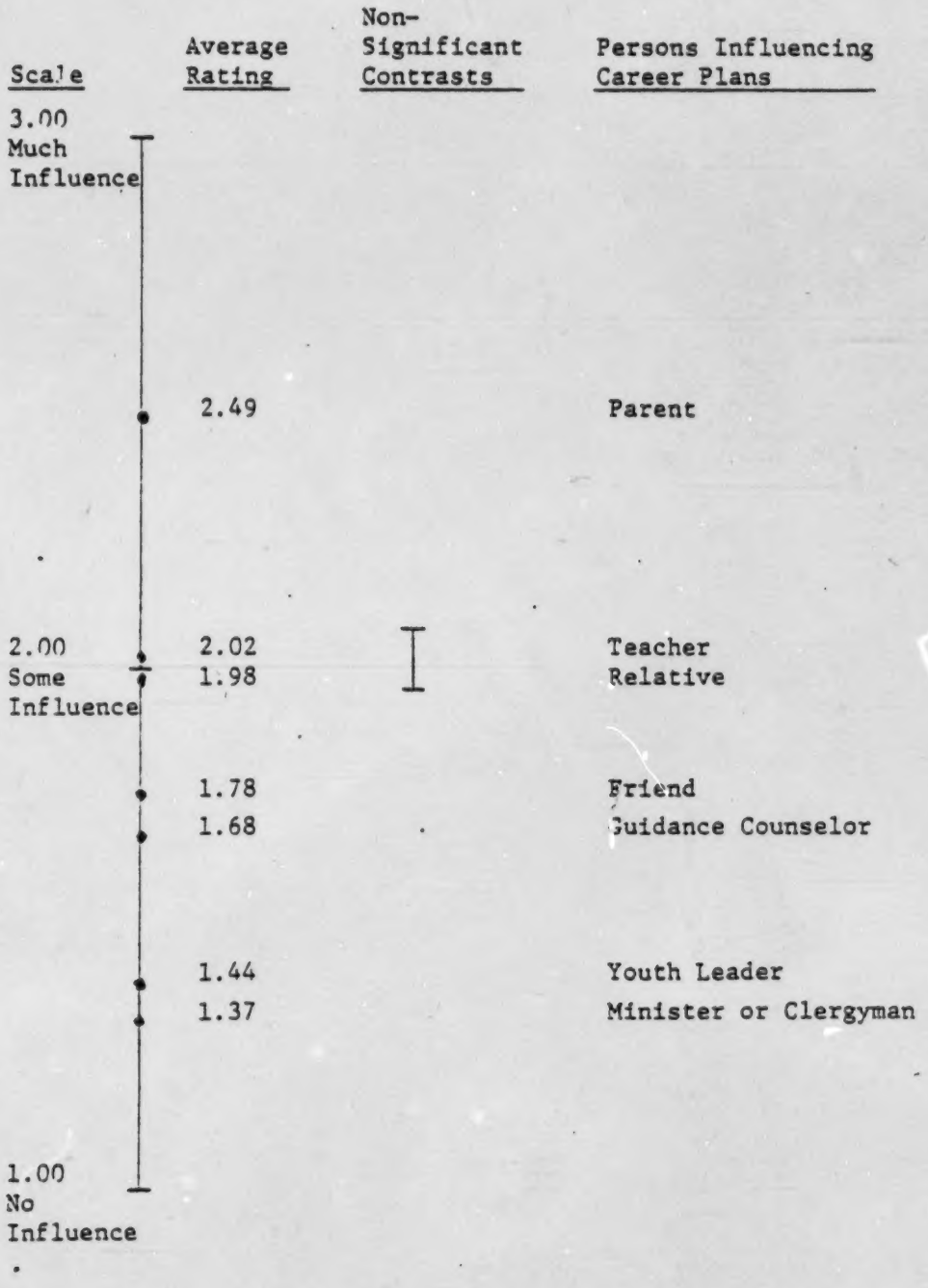
No significant differences were noted between the proportions of those reporting credit in BJC or Pitman English, as shown in Table 2. A higher percentage of parents who attended college was reported by those who were interested in teaching than was reported by those not interested in teaching. After completing Grade 12, those interested in teaching indicated in greater proportions their intentions of pursuing education abroad. In the five-year career projection, a higher proportion of those interested in teaching reported they would be engaged in business than was reported by those not interested in teaching. However, a greater percentage of those not interested in teaching reported expectations they would still be in school in five years. Although furthering their education was deemed important by both groups, a significantly higher percentage of those interested in teaching expressed further education to be very important to their career plans.

Influence of Persons on Career Plans

Contrast by response categories. When average overall Grade 12 student ratings of the influence of selected persons on career plans was assessed on a three-point scale, significant differences between the ordered means were noted in all but one contrast, as shown in Figure 1. The most influence on career plans was noted as coming from parents with the average rating (2.49) in the middle of the some influence and much influence points on the scale. No significant difference was noted between teachers' and relatives' influence on career plans with both average ratings (2.02 and 1.98 respectively) falling at the some influence category of the three-point scale. The average rating of

Figure 1

Contrasted Grade 12 Student Average Ratings of Influence of Selected Persons on Their Career Plans



friends' influence on career plans (1.78) and that of guidance counselors (1.68) were observed to be on the no influence side of the some influence response category. Whereas, the average ratings of the influence on career plans by youth leaders (1.44) and ministers or clergymen (1.37) were noted to be nearer the no influence response category.

These findings are similar to those reported by Pallone et al (1970) in identifying the parental influence on occupational choice. The peer or friend in that study, however, was ranked above teacher and relative. This investigation concludes the friend is perceived to have less influence on career plans than either teacher or relative.

Male vs. female. In five of seven categories, males and females were consistent in identifying the influence of selected persons on their career plans, as presented in Table 9. Assessed on the three-point scale, the average ratings of parental influence were noted to be highest for both groups. Although friends had lesser influence, males did report more influence on career plans by their friends than did females. Women Grade 12 students, however, noted more influence by teachers on their career plans than did male students.

Nassau vs. family islands. No significant differences were noted between Nassau and family island students on the perceived influence parents, relatives and friends have on their career plans, as presented in Table 9. Family island students indicated a greater influence on career plans by teachers, ministers or clergymen, and youth leaders. Nassau students reported guidance counselors to have a greater affect on their career plans than was reported by family island students.

Table 9

Average Influence of Selected Persons on Grade 12
Student Career Plans, Assessed on 3-point Scale

Person Influencing Career Plans	Composite Average (1403)	By Sex		By School Location		By School Type		By Interest In Teaching	
		Male (524)	Female (866)	Nassau (1136)	Family Island (267)	Public (732)	Private (671)	Yes (441)	No (952)
Friend	1.78	1.83 *	1.75	1.78	1.79	1.85 *	1.71	1.85 *	1.75
Parent	2.49	2.48	2.50	2.50	2.46	2.57 *	2.41	2.52	2.48
Relative	1.98	1.96	1.99	1.96	2.04	2.07 *	1.88	2.07 *	1.93
Teacher	2.02	1.96 *	2.05	1.97 *	2.22	2.14 *	1.90	2.20 *	1.94
Guidance Counselor	1.68	1.67	1.68	1.71 *	1.54	1.84 *	1.52	1.80 *	1.63
Minister or Clergyman	1.37	1.35	1.39	1.34 *	1.51	1.46 *	1.29	1.47 *	1.33
Youth Leader	1.44	1.42	1.46	1.41 *	1.61	1.56 *	1.33	1.58 *	1.38

*p<.05

Public vs. private. Both public and private school Grade 12 students were consistent in their overall ranking of the influence of selected persons on their career plans, as noted in Table 9. However, in each of the seven contrasts, public school students reported a greater influence by these persons on their career plans than was reported by private school students.

Interested in teaching vs. Not interested in teaching. No significant difference of parental influence on career plans was noted between those interested in teaching and those not interested in teaching. Both groups indicated parents had the most influence on their career plans. However, those interested in teaching indicated more influence on their career plans by each of the other selected persons (teacher, relative, friend, guidance counselor, youth leader, and minister or clergyman) than was expressed by those not interested in teaching, as shown in Table 9.

Interest in Teaching

Male vs. female. Women Grade 12 students in college-preparatory programs expressed an overall greater interest in pursuing a teaching career than did men. As shown in Table 4, 38 percent of the female Grade 12 students responding indicated an interest in teaching, versus 21 percent of the male Grade 12 students indicating such an interest.

Nassau vs. family islands. Proportionately, more interest in teaching was expressed by family island Grade 12 students than was reported by Nassau Grade 12 students. Note Table 4 showing much interest in teaching reported by 17 percent of the family island students, in contrast to 7 percent of the Nassau students expressing much interest in the field of education.

Public vs. private. A significant greater interest in teaching was expressed by Grade 12 public school students (38 percent) than was reported by Grade 12 private school students (25 percent). The comparative results shown in Table 4 indicate this greater interest in teaching was demonstrated at both the primary and secondary school levels.

Ratings of Teacher Training Program

Male vs. female. Male and female students were consistent in their appraisals of four selected aspects of the teacher training program at The College of the Bahamas. The consistencies noted, as presented in Table 5, were in ratings of college entrance requirements, length of the training period, appeal of the teacher training program and cost of college.

Nassau vs. family islands. Nassau and family island Grade 12 students in college-preparatory programs were also consistent in their perceptions of three aspects of the teacher training program at The College of the Bahamas: college entrance requirements, length of the training period, and appeal of the teacher training program (as illustrated in Table 5). A higher proportion of family island students, however, rated the cost of college as too expensive. Also, a greater proportion of the family island students indicated a lack of knowledge concerning these costs.

Public vs. private. Each of the four aspects of the teacher training program at the College of The Bahamas presented in Table 5 were perceived differently by public and private school Grade 12 students.

Overall, private school students indicated less knowledge of each aspect assessed than did public school students. Proportionately, more public school students rated college entrance requirements as too high than did private school students. The public and private school students who rated the length of the training period were consistent in their perceptions. The appeal of the teacher training program was rated much higher by public school Grade 12 students than by their private school counterparts. Finally, the expense of college was rated as affordable by a markedly higher percentage of private school students than public school students.

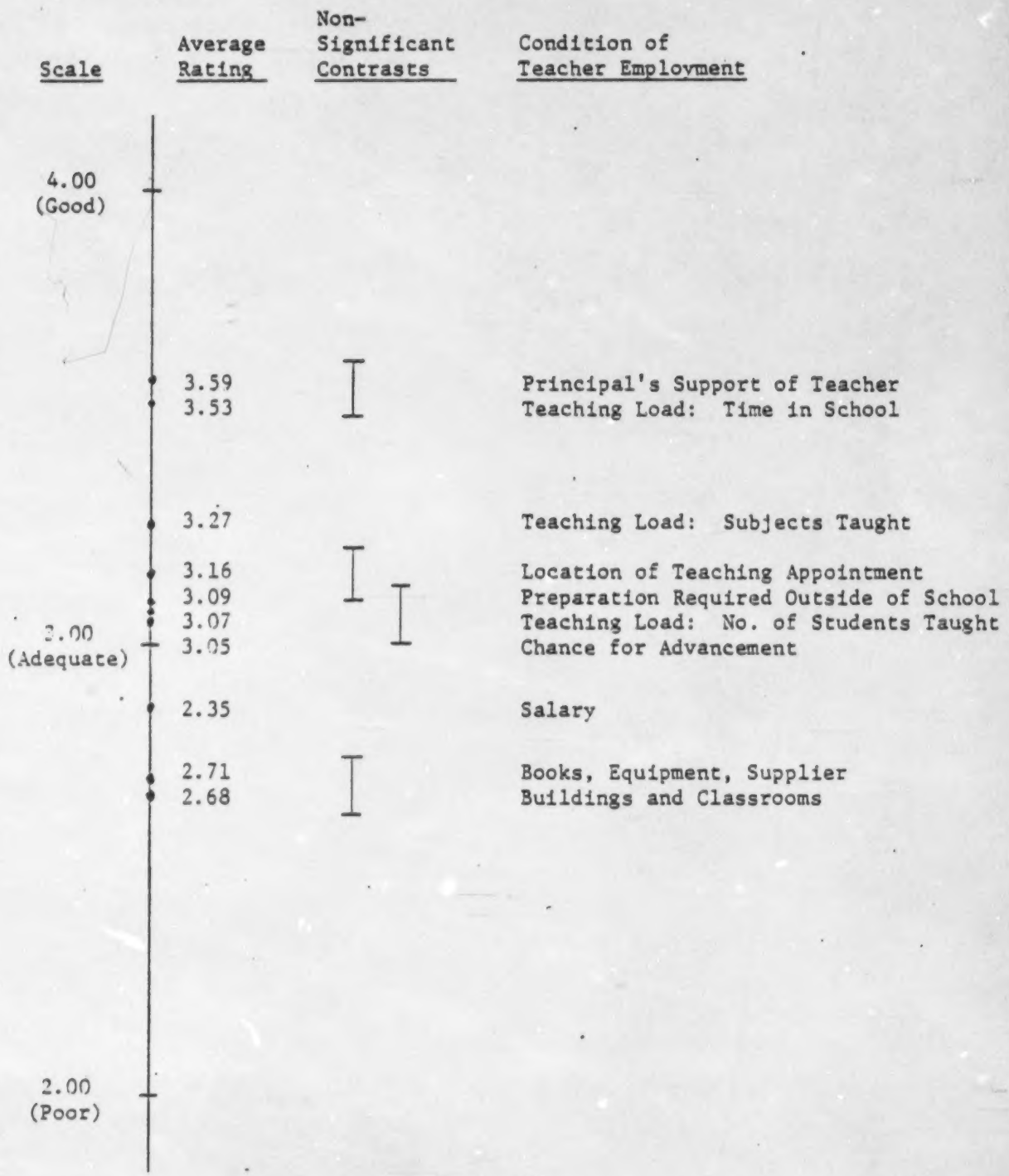
Interested in teaching vs. Not interested in teaching. Those professing an interest in teaching indicated greater understanding of the program at The College of the Bahamas than those not interested in teaching, as shown in Table 5. Of those rating the four aspects of the college program, students interested in teaching rated the appeal of the program higher. Proportionately, more of those not interested in pursuing a teaching career rated the cost of college as affordable; whereas, more of those interested in teaching identified college as being too expensive or the need for at least a small grant.

Conditions of Teacher Employment

Contrast by response categories. The average response ratings of ten conditions of teacher employment were assessed on a five-point scale with an overall average rating of 3.1. As illustrated in Figure 2, the ordered means and corresponding contrasts produced two conditions significantly higher than the others. Principal's support of the

Figure 2

Contrasted Grade 12 Student Average Ratings
of Conditions of Teacher Employment



teacher (3.59) and time the teacher must spend in school (3.53) were perceived midway between the adequate and good response categories. Five conditions of teacher employment were observed to be rated just above adequate. The salary (2.85), books, equipment, and supplies (2.71), and buildings and classrooms (2.68) were all perceived on the average to be less than adequate (3.00).

Male vs. female. In seven of the ten conditions of teacher employment assessed, there were no significant differences between male and female average ratings on the five-point scale, as shown in Table 10. However, males rated buildings and classrooms higher than did females. The women Grade 12 students judged two aspects of the teaching load, subjects taught and time spent in school, higher than did their male

Nassau vs. family islands. As shown in Table 10, family island Grade 12 students rated two conditions of teaching employment, school buildings and number of students taught, higher than did Nassau Grade 12 students. No significant differences were noted between the two groups in the remaining eight teaching conditions assessed.

Public vs. private. The location of the teaching appointment and preparation time required outside of school were conditions of teaching employment perceived similarly by both the public and private school Grade 12 students in college-preparatory programs. As presented in Table 10, private school students rated school buildings and equipment significantly higher than did public school students. Conditions of teacher employment rated higher by public school students included: salary, chance for advancement, three aspects of the teaching load (subjects taught, number of students taught, and time spent in school), as well as, principal's support of the classroom teacher.

Table 10

Average Grade 12 Student Ratings of the Conditions
Under Which Teachers are Employed, Assessed on 5-point Scale

	Composite Average (1403)	By Sex		By School Location		By School Type		By Interest in Teaching	
		Male (524)	Female (866)	Nassau (1136)	Family Island (267)	Public (732)	Private (671)	Yes (441)	No (952)
Buildings and Classrooms	2.68	2.77 *	2.62	2.65 *	2.81	2.55 *	2.84	2.83 *	2.62
Books, Equipment, Supplies	2.71	2.75	2.68	2.72	2.64	2.48 *	2.95	2.72	2.70
Salary	2.85	2.86	2.86	2.88	2.76	3.08 *	2.62	3.01 *	2.78
Location of Teaching Appointment	3.16	3.13	3.18	3.17	3.14	3.19	3.13	3.31 *	3.09
Chance for Advancement	3.05	3.10	3.02	3.07	3.00	3.15 *	2.95	3.22 *	2.98
Teaching Load: Subjects Taught	3.27	3.19 *	3.32	3.27	3.27	3.34 *	3.20	3.39 *	3.22
Teaching Load: Number Students Taught	3.07	3.04	3.10	3.03 *	3.22	3.16 *	2.98	3.15	3.04
Teaching Load: Time in School	3.53	3.46 *	3.57	3.52	3.54	3.58 *	3.47	3.58	3.50
Preparation Required Outside of School	3.09	3.03	3.13	3.10	3.09	3.06	3.12	3.20 *	3.04
Principal's Support of Teacher	3.59	3.63	3.56	3.59	3.59	3.71 *	3.46	3.79 *	3.50

*p<.05

Interested in teaching vs. Not interested in teaching. Consistent average ratings were noted by those interested in pursuing a teaching career and those not so inclined for three conditions of teaching employment (supplies, number of students taught and time spent in school), as presented in Table 10. Seven of the ten conditions of teacher employment were perceived more favorably by those interested in teaching than those who were not (buildings, salary, location of teaching appointment, chance for advancement, subjects taught, preparation time required outside of school and principal's support of the classroom teacher).

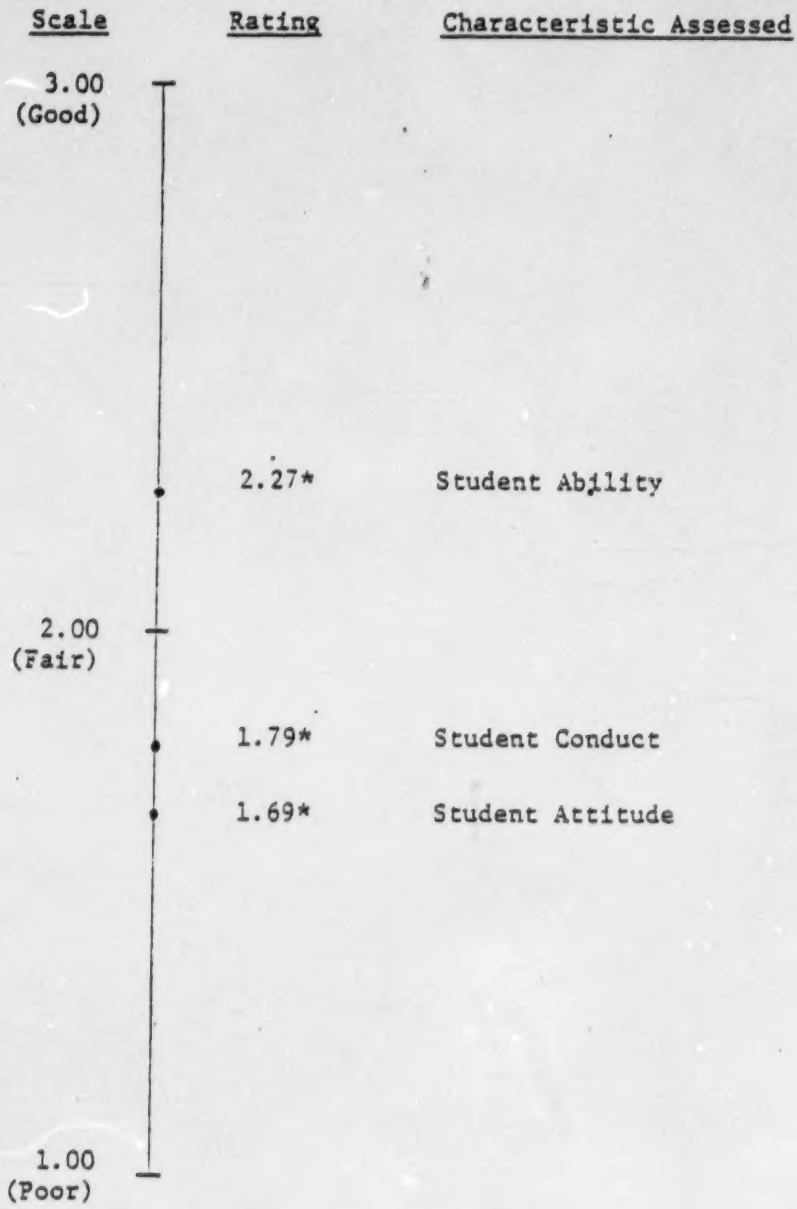
Student Characteristics

Contrast by response categories. Analysis of the overall Grade 12 student ratings of characteristics of students in schools in the Bahamas was made on a three-point scale. The average ratings of ability, attitude and conduct were all found to be significantly different as illustrated in Figure 3. The average rating of student ability (2.27) was on the good side of the fair category. Whereas, the average ratings for both student conduct (1.79) and student attitude (1.69) were on the poor side of the fair category.

Male vs. female. On the average, women Grade 12 students in college-preparatory programs perceived the overall ability of students in schools in the Bahamas to be higher than was perceived by male students. As offered in Table 11, no significant differences were noted on the three-point scale between male and female Grade 12 student ratings of student attitude and conduct.

Figure 3

Contrasted Grade 12 Student Average Ratings of Characteristics of Students in School in the Bahamas



*All contrasts significant at $p<.05$

Table 11

Average Grade 12 Student Ratings of Characteristics of Students in Schools in the Bahamas, Assessed on 3-point Scale

Characteristic Assessed	Composite Average (1403)	By Sex		By School Location		By School Type		By Interest in Teaching	
		Male (524)	Female (866)	Nassau (1136)	Family Island (267)	Public (732)	Private (671)	Yes (441)	No (952)
Student Ability	2.27	2.20 *	2.31	2.27	2.24	2.31 *	2.23	2.32 *	2.25
Student Attitude	1.69	1.65	1.71	1.70	1.64	1.75 *	1.63	1.74	1.67
Student Conduct	1.79	1.77	1.80	1.76 *	1.91	1.86 *	1.71	1.85 *	1.76

*p<.05

Nassau vs. family islands. Consistent overall ratings were noted by Nassau and family island Grade 12 students in their assessments of student ability and attitude, as presented in Table 2. The conduct of students in schools, however, was rated significantly higher by the family island students than by the Nassau students.

Public vs. private. As shown in Table 2, each of the three student characteristics assessed (ability, attitude and conduct) were rated more favorably by public school students than by private school students.

Interested in teaching vs. Not interested in teaching. The overall ability of students presently in school was rated higher by Grade 12 students interested in teaching than by those not interested in teaching, as noted in Table 2. The Grade 12 students interested in teaching rated student conduct higher than those not interested in teaching. No significant difference between the two groups was noted in the rating of student attitude.

Teaching Compared with Other Lines of Work

Male vs. female. Both male and female Grade 12 student ratings were similar in comparing the difficulty and prestige of teaching with other lines of work, as presented in Table 8. Although both groups rated salary and rewards higher for other lines of work than for teaching, the female Grade 12 student ratings were more favorable of teaching than were the male ratings.

Nassau vs. family islands. The Nassau and family island Grade 12 students in college-preparatory programs were in agreement in their low ratings of teacher salary when compared to other lines of work, as

presented in Table 8. Difficulty of the job was also assessed similarly by both groups. Although two aspects of employment (prestige of the position and chance for rewards/advancement) were rated markedly lower for teaching than other lines of work, Nassau Grade 12 students were more critical of these aspects of the teaching profession than were their family island counterparts.

Public vs. private. In comparing teaching with other lines of work, the difficulty of the job was not perceived differently by public and private school students, as noted in Table 8. In each of the other aspects of employment assessed (salary, prestige and rewards), public school Grade 12 student ratings were more favorable towards teaching than were the private school student ratings.

Interested in teaching vs. Not interested in teaching. Only one aspect of teacher employment (job difficulty) was rated similarly by those interested in teaching and those not interested in teaching as indicated in Table 8. When comparing teaching with other lines of work, those who reported an interest in teaching rated salary, prestige and rewards of teacher employment higher than did those not interested in teaching.

Student Ability vs. Student Attitude

In Table 12, contrasted responses are presented for Grade 12 student ratings of the overall ability and overall attitude of students in schools in the Bahamas. In 41 percent of the responses, consistent ratings of student ability and attitude were observed. However, in 56 percent of the paired responses, student attitude was rated lower than student ability.

Table 12

Cross Tabulation of Grade 12 Student Ratings of the Overall Ability and Overall Attitude of Students in Schools in the Bahamas

Student Ability		Student Attitude Good	Fair	Poor	Total
Good	No.	64	293	85	442
	Pct.	(4.8)	(21.8)	(6.3)	(33)
Fair	No.	30	420	368	818
	Pct.	(2.2)	(31.3)	(27.4)	(61)
Poor	No.	0	24	60	84
	Pct.		(1.8)	(4.5)	(6)
Total	No.	94	737	513	1344
	Pct.	(7)	(55)	(38)	(100)

A Profile of Those Indicating "Much Interest" in Teaching

Of the 1403 Grade 12 students in college-preparatory programs participating in the study, 128 indicated much interest in becoming a teacher. Of those much interested in teaching, 84 were from Nassau and 44 were from the family islands. Proportionately, 7 percent of the Nassau Grade 12 students were very interested in teaching; whereas, 16 percent of the family island students were very interested in teaching. Of those much interested in teaching, 75 percent attended public schools, and 78 percent were women.

Discussion of the Findings

Male-Female

In college-preparatory programs, 62 percent of the Grade 12 students were female and 38 percent were male. The background achievement measures of female students were on the average equal to that of male students.

The disproportionately low representation of males in Grade 12 college-preparatory programs implies the teaching profession will be staffed predominately by women in the future. As the pool from which prospective teachers come, these males also comprise the limited masculine pool for competing lines of employment.

Influence of Selected Persons on Career Plans

The source noted as having the most influence on the Grade 12 students' career plans was the parent. Thus, it is society's attitude

towards teaching as reflected by the parent which encourages or discourages students in considering the teaching profession as a career. The parties directly involved in education, teachers and guidance counselors, were noted to have some influence on career plans. However, parents were clearly identified as being most influential.

Importance of Further Education

Most (99 percent) of the Grade 12 students participating in this study reported further education was impo-tant to their career plans. Their strong interest in the professions and business careers provides those in higher education with expectations of (1) many students being interested in attending college, and (2) identifiable curricular areas which these students prefer most.

Interest in Teaching

A total of 441 Grade 12 students in college-preparatary programs (32 percent of those responding) indicated at least some interest in pursuing a teaching career. Those interested in teaching on the average passed fewer subject area achievement tests (BJCs) than those not interested in teaching. The implication is those more academically inclined are not interested in teaching.

Teacher Training Program

When asked to rate four aspects of the teacher training program at The College of the Bahamas, the most common response by the Grade 12 students in college-preparatory programs was "Don't Know." Those in

private schools, furthermore, indicated less awareness than those in public schools. Students interested in teaching, however, appeared more informed about some aspects of the college than those not interested in teaching. Many of those interested in teaching indicated a need for financial assistance to attend college.

Conditions of Teacher Employment

On an absolute scale the conditions of teacher employment were generally rated in the adequate range. Yet, when aspects of teaching were compared with other lines of work, they were rated lower.

Of the ten conditions of teacher employment assessed, seven averaged in the adequate-to-fair range. These were the intangibles of teacher employment. Significantly lower rated, in the poor-to-adequate range, were the three tangible or material aspects of teacher employment: salary; books, equipment, supplies; and buildings and classrooms.

Student Characteristics

The overall ability of students in schools in the Bahamas was perceived to be in the fair-to-good range; whereas, both overall student attitude and conduct were rated in the poor-to-fair range. Thus, students in schools in the Bahamas are perceived as not performing or behaving as expected. So, confounding the low ratings of conditions of teacher employment, those selecting teaching as a career must consider working with underachieving students who do not behave particularly well.

Teaching vs. Other Lines of Work

When compared with other lines of work they were interested in, the Grade 12 students in college-preparatory programs did not perceive the difficulty of teaching as being different than other vocations they were considering. However, the salary, prestige and rewards were rated markedly lower for teaching than for other lines of employment. Thus, for similar work (difficulty) the Grade 12 students perceived getting less out of teaching in salary, prestige and rewards than from other lines of work.

Recommendations

Consistent with the findings of this investigation, the following recommendations are made to address the future of education in the Bahamas.

1. If it is deemed important to have male representation in the teaching ranks, special incentives need be added to encourage men to pursue a teaching career.

2. Parents have the most influence on career plans as reported by the Grade 12 students in college-preparatory programs. Thus, the negative perception of teaching as a career is not localized in the schools. The public should be informed of the positive aspects of becoming a teacher. The profession could be given enhanced prestige through recognition by public officials, organizations and the media.

3. In their final year in high school, 441 Grade 12 students in college-preparatory programs did indicate at least some interest in teaching. Of these, 128 professed much interest in teaching. Thus, there is at this point in their education, a sufficient interest in the profession to produce an adequate number of teachers.

4. With the importance the Grade 12 students placed on continued education, the significance of having good teachers could be related to this positive perception of education.

5. The Grade 12 students identified a need for financial assistance to attend college. Financial inducements to a student's continued education may encourage the pursuit of a teaching career.

6. The Grade 12 students in college-preparatory programs participated in this study during the last months of the school year. Thus, methods being used to communicate continued education at The College of the Bahamas are not being received or understood. Endeavors to publicize programs and admission procedures at the College must be assessed by the understanding prospective students have regarding this information. Special efforts should be made to communicate to private school students.

7. With 56 percent of the responses rating overall student attitude less than ability, the Grade 12 students perceive teaching as a profession where one works with children who are not motivated to do as well as they are able. This apathy toward academic pursuits was also reflected in the low rating of student conduct. To attract prospective teachers, this issue need also be addressed.

8. Enhanced student opportunity for recognition and rewards at all levels of education might be utilized to uplift this student image problem. Most of the recognition education has received through the media has been comprised of Ministry of Education and school administrative personnel. A concerted media effort should be made to recognize students and their educational programs. (During the school year this study

was conducted, numerous showings of a film depicting acts of vandalism represented the most prevalent television recognition of a Bahamian student).

9. The tangible aspects of teacher employment were recognized as markedly deficient in contrast to those conditions of teaching which were not perceived as material in nature. Obviously, only increased financial resources can enhance these conditions and thus, the ratings of the material aspects of teacher employment: the salary; books, equipment, and supplies; and buildings and classrooms.

10. Conditions of teaching were not scored particularly low when rated in isolation. However, when compared with other employment opportunities the salary, prestige and rewards of teacher employment were rated lower. The favorable employment aspects of the teaching profession, could be publicized to promote interest in the profession.

Conclusion

This study represents a broad survey of Grade 12 students in college-preparatory programs to ascertain their attitudes towards becoming a teacher. For this investigation to facilitate better understanding of student perceptions towards a teaching career, it is essential the results and findings be reviewed and the recommendations discussed.

Subsequent investigations are encouraged to address matters relate to this study.

1. This study could be replicated after programs are implemented to mote any changes in the perceptions of Grade 12 students in college-preparatory programs toward the teaching profession.

2. The subjects questioned in this study could be surveyed in a follow-up investigation to determine if their attitudes towards teaching change, and how many become teachers.

3. In this society, the personality characteristics of students could be compared with the environment of the job, as proposed by Roe (1956), Super (1957), and Holland (1973), to address the person-situation correspondence and the development of career counseling programs (Herr and Cramer, 1979).

References

Bratcher, W. E. The influence of the family on career selection: A family systems perspective. Personnel and Guidance Journal, 1982, 61, 87-91.

Freshman characteristics and attitudes. The Chronicle of Higher Education, February 17, 1982, p. 10.

Goodson, W. D. Which do college students choose first--Their major or their occupation? Vocational Guidance Quarterly, 1978, 27, 150-155.

Gordon, V. N. Reasons for entering college and academic and vocational preferences. Journal of College Student Personnel, 1982, 23, 371-377.

Herr, E. L. and Cramer, S. H. Career Guidance Through the Life Span. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1979.

Holland, J. L. The Psychology of Vocational Choice. Waltham, Massachusetts: Blaisdell, 1966.

Pallone, J. J., Rickard, F. J. and Hurley, R. B. Key influencers of occupational preference among black youth. Journal of Counseling Psychology, 1970, 17, 498-501.

Roe, A. Psychology of Occupations. New York: Wiley, 1956.

Super, D. E. The Psychology of Careers. New York: Harper, 1957.

This year's freshmen found oriented toward financial success. The Chronicle of Higher Education, February 17, 1982, p. 10.